



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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**MAYOR JERRY SANDERS  
PRESS RELEASE**

**MAYOR SANDERS APPOINTS FOUR NEW MEMBERS TO  
SOUTHEASTERN ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT CORP.  
BOARD OF DIRECTORS**

Mayor Jerry Sanders has named four new members to the Southeastern Economic Development Corp. board of directors: Gina Champion-Cain, Vernon Evans, Richard Lawrence and Simon Wong, subject to City Council confirmation.

“These four individuals bring an incredible depth and range of experience and expertise to this board, and I have no doubt that their capabilities will benefit this organization tremendously,” said Sanders. “We’re grateful for their willingness to serve the San Diego community in this capacity.”

Champion-Cain is the president and CEO of American National Investments, a real estate services company that specializes in urban development. She has extensive experience in real estate development, finance, economic revitalization and asset management.

Currently an active member of the International Council of Shopping Centers and the Urban Land Institute, Champion-Cain has served on the boards of directors of the American Lung Association, Centre City Development Corp. and YMCA. Champion-Cain holds a bachelor’s degree in philosophy and political science from the University of Michigan and a master’s degree in business administration from the University of San Diego. She holds a California real estate broker’s license and is a Certified Property Manager.

Champion-Cain will replace Kea Hagan, whose term has expired. Champion-Cain’s term expires May 25, 2011.

Vernon Evans is the vice president of finance and treasurer of the San Diego Regional Airport Authority. Prior to joining the Airport Authority in 2003, Evans had a 17-year career with the Dallas/Fort Worth International Airport, most recently serving as the facility's executive vice president of finance and chief financial officer. In this capacity, he was responsible for financing, monitoring and managing a \$2.6 billion capital-development program. Prior to that, he was the airport's deputy executive director for administrative services and its director of audit services.

Evans has served on the Texas State Board of Public Accountants and the boards of the Institute of Internal Auditors, National Association of Black Accountants and Fort Worth Metropolitan YMCA. He was recently inducted into the Business and Industry Hall of Fame by the American Institute of Certified Public Accountants (AICPA), and selected as CFO of the year by the *San Diego Business Journal*. He currently chairs the Jackie Robinson Family YMCA board of managers.

Evans earned bachelor's and master's degrees in accounting from the University of North Texas. He is a Certified Public Accountant, Chief Internal Auditor, Certified Management Accountant and Certified Government Financial Manager.

Evans will replace Randy Jones, who is termed out. Evans' term expires May 25, 2011.

Lawrence is the managing coordinator of San Diego Works for Better Health, a California Endowment project which brings together the United African-American Ministerial Action Council, Center on Policy Initiatives and the MAAC Project. He is also the president of Lawrence Enterprises, a family-owned investment and consulting company that operates photography/video, roofing, trophy, and pool maintenance and repair businesses. Lawrence has served in various community development, project management, public sector and philanthropic roles since 1969, including serving as the director of the Minority Community Development Program for the Cummins Engine Foundation in Chicago, manager of corporate and foundation relations for the Massachusetts Executive Office of Economic Affairs in Boston, and as a City Councilmember in Lawrence, Mass., where he chaired the Small Business Revolving Loan Fund Committee and was also the vice-chair of the Housing & Economic Development Committee.

His extensive business development expertise includes having served as director of a small business development program at the Boston University School of Management and executive director of the Lawrence Minority Business Council. He is currently an Adjunct Faculty Member for Springfield College and has served on the city of San Diego's Affordable Housing Task Force.

Lawrence received a bachelor's degree in English and his teaching certificate from Albion College, as well as a master's degree in divinity from the University of Chicago. He is a graduate of Harvard University's Graduate School of Business Administration Program for Management Development.

Lawrence will replace Charles Simpson, whose term has expired. Lawrence's term expires May 25, 2009.

Wong has more than 28 years' experience in construction management and engineering and is the founder and president of Simon Wong Engineering, one of the largest construction management and engineering firms in San Diego. The 22-year-old firm specializes in structural design, retrofit, construction management, bridge construction and water/wastewater infrastructure. Wong's construction management projects include the North County Transit District's Oceanside to Escondido Sprinter Rail Line, seismic retrofit of the North Torrey Pines Road Bridge and design of the Black Mountain Ranch Reservoir and the international gates at Lindbergh Field.

An active business and community leader, Wong is the past president of the San Diego chapter of Consulting Engineers and Land Surveyors of California, Structural Engineers Association of San Diego and Asian Business Association board of directors. He also has donated design services for the Rock-n-Roll Marathon and currently serves on the board of directors for Sharp Healthcare.

Wong received a bachelor's degree and master's degree in civil engineering from the University of Nevada, Reno.

He will replace Chip Owen, whose term has expired. Wong's term expires May 25, 2010.

"These appointments are a major step toward fulfilling my goal of improving oversight of the SEDC," Sanders said. "I'll continue to work with the Council and the community to ensure that this important organization is run responsibly and efficiently."

The City Council must approve the board appointments; the vote is expected to take place at the Sept. 2 City Council meeting.

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